



# CHAPTER SEVEN





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## *Holy Places*



# STUPAS

- Burial mound. Early stupas were dome-shaped; symbolized Mt. Meru (Buddhist center of the universe). Parasols placed on top of stupas symbolizing royalty. Stories and sacred texts decorate the sides. Legend states that Indian ruler Asoka divided Buddha's ashes into 84,000 parts. Most just contain writings, relics, ashes, and hair clippings of Buddhists priests.
- Four most important stupas were built in India (honors Buddha's path to enlightenment):
  - Lumbini: symbolizes birth of Buddha



- Bodh Gaya: located at site where Buddha became enlightened under bodhi tree.
- Sarnath: located where Buddha first shared his teachings
- Kushinagara: celebrates Buddha's entry to Nirvana
- People visiting stupas bring flowers, incense, and candles; they walk around the stupas 3 times (symbolizing Three Jewels)



- Stupas vary in shape according to where you are:
  - Southeast Asia: traditional dome
  - Tibet: stretched vertically
  - China, Japan, Korea: taken form of pagoda
    - Pagodas are usually eight-sided, made of bricks (China) or wood (Japan)



# TEMPLES

- Stupas can stand alone or be part of a larger temples/monastaries
- Temples honor Buddha, Buddhist saints, and display talent of architects/builders of temples.



# THE SHWE DAGON TEMPLE

- Located in Tangon, Myanmar
- 325 feet high. Covered with gold leaf; contains 8 of Buddha's hairs (said to have been pulled from Buddha's head by himself and left their with specific instructions to be encased in stupa there)



# THE TEMPLE OF THE SACRED TOOTH

- Located in Kandy, Sri Lanka
- Supposedly contains one of Buddha's teeth



# ANGKOR WAT AND ANGKOR THOM

- Angkor was ancient capital of Cambodia when it was part of the Kymmer Empire (A.D. 800 - A.D. 1200).
- Angkor Wat was built by King Suryavarman II in 12th century as Hindu shrine; later became Buddhist temple.
- Angkor Thom was a fortress surrounded by a moat and walls. Built in about 1200 by King Jayavarman VII. Walls are 8 miles around and surrounds a 5-square mile city. Main tower is 150 feet tall.



# BOROBUDUR TEMPLE

- Located in Java. Largest Buddhist temple in world; covers 15,000 square meters of land, contains 2 million pieces of stone and 72 stupas. Whole temple contains 504 statues of Buddha. Built in 8th century. Was rediscovered and rebuilt in 1814.
- *Borobudur* means “shrine of many Buddhas”



# TODAIJI TEMPLE

- Located in Nara, Japan. Contains tallest statue of Buddhist statue (bodhisattva Dainichi) in the world. 50 feet tall and made of gilded bronze. It is also the world's largest wooden structure.



# THE GREAT BUDDHA OF KAMAKURA

- Statue of Buddha 35 feet tall
- Kept in a temple for over 200 years until a tsunami tore the temple down. The statue is still standing after 500 years in the open.



# MONASTERIES

- Monks are far from hermits because the monasteries are open to the public.
- Have huts for monks and nuns to sleep in.
- Monks only own a razor, bowl and washcloth personally.
- Monasteries also serve as community centers, hospitals, schools, employment agencies and inns.



# PILGIMAGE SITES

- Other than stupas, there are other famous religious sites.
- The mountain Sri Pada in Sri Lanka.
  - Also called Adam's Peak.
  - Muslims believe Adam landed there after being banned from the Garden of Eden.
  - People meditate by foot like prints in the stone at top. They believe the prints were put there by Buddha himself.



